The Chronicle and Index

OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

No. 15, Vol. ii.] BELFAST, MARCH 1st, 1882, [For Gratuitous Circulation

OUR friends will please note that the Depository is now at No. 16 in the Queen's Arcade, Donegall Place. On visiting it they will find it a pleasant and useful place, well supplied with books, tracts, periodicals, and stationery, and we hope they will avail themselves of the advantages which it offers. To our country friends it will prove a most convenient place of call, where they may leave their parcels, write their letters, or meet their friends, and where they will be able to make the acquaintance of their fellow-worshippers in Belfast. All books and stationery can be procured on the very best terms.

OUR readers will be glad to know that the Rev. C. C. Coe, F.G.S., of Bolton, has consented to visit Belfast in order to preach the annual sermons on behalf of the Unitarian Society. The Sunday selected is April 23rd, when Mr. Coe will preach morning and evening in Rosemary Street Church, and in the afternoon at Moneyrea. After each sermon there will be a collection in aid of the funds of the Society. On the following day the annual meeting of the Society will be held in the Lecture Hall, Rosemary Street, when it is hoped there will be a large gathering of friends. Full details will be given in our next number. In the meantime it is necessary that the annual subscriptions should be paid in as soon as possible.

WE hope our readers will not forget the Conference that is to be held in Liverpool on the 18th, 19th, and 20th of April, and that as many as possible will try to be present. The Conference presents a great opportunity for a splendid demonstration in favour of Free Religion, and we hope it will not be lost.

IT is to be regretted that within the limits of our churches are to be found men who are quietly working for, or openly advocating a separation between those who accept the supernatural basis of Christianity and those who, having given up any belief in miracles or supernatural and infallible inspiration, yet find warrant in nature, in reason, and in conscience for a firm and glowing belief in God and immortality, and who test religion more by character than by creed. We are sorry to see the Rev. J. P. Ham lending himself to such a scheme, and heartily approve of the condemnation he has received from the editor of the *Inquirer*. How men who confessedly do not hold that a conscientious belief in any creed will endanger the safety of any soul can work to promote divisions and separations because of diversity of opinion we cannot understand! But the effort will be futile. A few dogmatists may separate from us and go their way, but the Free Churches will cling together and go fearlessly forward in their earnest quest for truth; and while they seek they will faithfully work and reverently worship together.

THE Sunday Evening Lectures of the Rev. J. C. Street in Rosemary Street Church have continued during the month of February. The subjects treated by him have been—on February 5th, "Purgatory;" on the 12th, "Prayers for the Dead;" on the 19th, "Final Restoration;" and on the 26th, "The City of God." The interest taken in these lectures has in no degree diminished, and there is no doubt that they are exercising a great influence for good in Belfast.

WE are glad to note that a new Liberal journal—the *Belfast Daily Post*—is about to be established, and that its price will be one halfpenny. Its prospectus has the right ring about it. It says "it will never fail to condemn wrong and applaud the right, without distinction of religious faith or political creed." This is the true function of the Press, and we shall hail with satisfaction the progress of an organ of news and principles that strives faithfully to exercise such a function. Belfast has great need of such a newspaper. We see that Dr. Hans M'Mordie is to be the editor, and we understand that Mr. Abernethy, late of the *Morning News*, is to be the business manager. Better men for the work could not easily be found.

The course of Non-Subscribing Lectures has continued during the month of February. The lecturers have been the Revs. Messrs. Crozier, Dunkerley, M'Alester, Thompson, and Alex. Gordon. The attendance has been fairly well maintained. We hope good results will follow the effort which has been made.

We are glad to record that, at the final meeting of the Senate of the Queen's University, the honorary degree of LL.D. was conferred upon Edward Gardner, Esq., LL.B., and Hugh Hyndman, Esq., LL.B. Dr. Gardner was formerly Secretary, and Dr. Hyndman is at present Treasurer, of the Unitarian Society.

At the monthly meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, 22nd February, in the committee-room of the Depository, 16 Queen's Arcade, there were present—Mr. James M. Darbishire (in the chair), Revs. John A. Kelly (Rademon), Harold Rylett (Moneyrea), James C. Street, and Messrs. W. A. Adamson (Carrickfergus), Geo. Fisher, John F. Mulligan, T. M'Clelland, J.P., R. M'Calmont, and J. R. Neill. The minutes of previous meeting having been read and confirmed, the monthly reports of the Sunday School and Book Committees were received. Several matters of importance came before the meeting, amongst which may be mentioned the coming annual meeting of the Society, and the removal from Donegall Street to Queen's Arcade. In connection with the latter, the sub-committee in charge of the removal reported that Mr. Henry Hunter, builder, of Canning Street, took charge of the fitting up of the new Depository, and had most generously refused all remuneration for his services. The Secretary was desired to convey to Mr. Hunter the best thanks of the Committee for his kindness and their appreciation of the excellent manner in which the work had been done.

The annual meeting of the Mountpottinger congregation was held after morning service on Sunday, the 19th February—Saml. C. Davidson, Esq., in the chair. The report read by the Secretary, Mr. James McWilliams, in recounting the work of the year, indicated "the revived zeal, the increased attendances, the unity of spirit within the church." There had been 17 new members added to the congregation, four had been lost by removals. The average morning attendance was 80; the average evening attendance was 71. The school consisted of 120 scholars, nearly all children of the congregation; a balance was due to the treasurer, but this the treasurer (Mr. James Davidson) was confident could soon be wiped off. The Chairman, heartily seconded by the congregation, spoke in high terms of Mr. Wright as their minister, of his having cleared off the debt in a way which business men could appreciate, of the plain, unassuming way in which he moved amongst them, of the useful and earnest manner in which he brought them together for various work, of the untiring spirit Mr. Wright displayed for the good of the children and of the congregation. A congregational soiree was held on the Tuesday evening following.

At the usual weekly meeting of the Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association, held on Monday evening, January 30th, Mr. Hooke delivered, in telling and poetical language, an eloquent lecture on "Other Inhabited Worlds," which was listened to with marked attention by a large and appreciative audience. At the conclusion, a hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer, moved by Mr. M'Clelland and seconded by Mr. Darbishire, was passed by acclamation.

On Monday evening, Feb. 6th, a paper, entitled "Orators and Oratory," was read by Mr. Murray Blair. The essayist treated the subject in a careful and instructive manner, and displayed considerable taste in the examples he submitted. A discussion on the paper followed.

Monday evening, February 13th, was devoted to music and readings. The programme, which was a varied one, was rendered by the members.

On Monday evening, Feb. 20th, an address on "Pseudo Republicanism" was delivered by Mr. F. D. F. O'Connor, who cited examples in support of his views, principally from the United States, France, and England. An animated discussion on the subject ensued.

On Monday evening, February 27th, in the unavoidable absence of the President (Rev. J. C. Street), the chair was occupied by Mr. James M. Darbishire. The Chairman briefly introduced the Rev. J. A. Kelly, Rademon, who delivered a very instructive lecture on "Seneca," at the conclusion of which, Mr. George Fisher moved, and Mr. F. D. F. O'Connor seconded, a vote of thanks to the lecturer for his able and

interesting lecture, which was carried by acclamation. The Chairman, in tendering the thanks of the Association to the lecturer, expressed the feeling of obligation the Society was under to him for his kindness in coming from such a distance to render his assistance. Mr. Kelly, in his reply, signified the pleasure it was to him to come amongst Belfast friends, and to contribute to the programme of the Society.

We hear with much satisfaction that the Church of the Second Congregation is to be fully represented at the Great Conference to be held in Liverpool. By a resolution of the Church Committee the following gentlemen have been appointed, and we understand that they all hope to be present:—Rev. J. C. Street, Dr. W. B. Ritchie, J.P., and Messrs. H. Hyndman, LL.D., Geo. Fisher, W. Rankin, and D. W. Moore.

The Unitarian Society will be represented at the same Meeting by the President, Mr. T. M'Clelland, J.P., and by Messrs. R. M'Calmont, F.C.S. (one of the Secretaries), and J. R. Neill.

We hope that many other Churches and Societies will be represented at this Conference.

All our readers will have heard, with horror and indignation, as we have done just before going to press, of the attempt made to assassinate the beloved Queen of these Realms. We are grateful that the attempt was a failure, and that the Queen has in no respect suffered from the dreadful shock. Congratulations have been poured in upon her from all parts of this Kingdom, and from the most distant parts of the civilized world. In the North of Ireland, and certainly among the Liberal Christians here, there is a deep thankfulness that Her Majesty's life has been preserved, and a sincere hope that she may long be spared to preside over the affairs of our great Nation.

BOOK NOTICES.

Sacred Similes: by P. E. Vizard.

Stories from the Life of Moses: by Richard Bartram.

Short Sermons to Children: by Three Cousins.

These are three new publications of the Sunday School Association, and they are thoroughly worthy the attention of Sunday School Teachers. Mr. Vizard's "similes" or metaphors, drawn from the Jewish Scriptures, are turned to excellent account by him, and he has produced a suggestive little book which will be of great use to the Teachers of Bible Classes, or to Superintendents who have to deliver addresses to children. The matter is good, and will prove useful to many Teachers.

Mr. Bartram has followed up his "Stories from the Book of Genesis" with an even more interesting series of "Stories from the Life of Moses." The Biblical narratives have been brought out and explained by him in a manner which is as attractive as it is useful. Biblical instruction conveyed in such a manner will arouse a new interest in old studies, and make them full of value for the life of to-day.

"Three Cousins" have given us eighteen charming addresses for children, which may be used with great acceptance in all our Sunday Schools. The themes are well selected, the treatment is lively and attractive, and the lessons are brought out with great power.

We heartily commend all three books to the attention of our readers, and would remind them that they are as valuable and as suitable for home reading as for the Sunday School. We hope that there will be a good demand for them, and that the Sunday School Association may be encouraged in the publication of such excellent manuals.

Each of these books may be had at the Depository, 16 Queen's Arcade, Donegall Place, for 10d.

SELECTIONS.

The wish that of the living whole,
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life;

That I, considering everywhere
The secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear.

I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar stairs,
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And fainting trust the larger hope.

—*Tennyson.*

WE may conclude that there is great hope that death is a blessing. For to die is one of two things; for either the dead may be annihilated and have no sensation of anything whatever; or, as it is said, there is a certain change and passage of the soul from one place to another. And if it is a privation of all sensation, as it were a sleep in which the sleeper has no dream, death would be a wonderful gain. For I think that if anyone, having selected a night, in which he slept so soundly as not to have had a dream, and having compared this night with all the other nights and days of his life, should be required on consideration to say how many days and nights he had passed better and more pleasantly than this night throughout his life, I think that not only a private person, but even the great Being himself, would find them easy to number in comparison with other days and nights. If, therefore, death is a thing of this kind, I say it is a gain; for thus all futurity appears to be nothing more than one night. But if, on the other hand, death is a removal from hence to another place, and what is said to be true, that all the dead are there, what greater blessing can there be than this, my judges?—*The Apology of Socrates.*

A MAN must choose his books as he chooses his friends; if good, let him stick close to them, and he will be happy. Again, the wise adage "Tell me what friends you keep, and I will tell you what sort of man you are," can be paralleled by one which asks what books you read, and then, from the answer presumes what manner of man you are. How different is the reading of the sportsman from that of the divine. What a peculiar literature is that of Evangelicism compared with that of the High Church! How wrapped up is one man in the literature of stones, trees, hedges, and fields! How devoted is another to that which tells only of town life, gaiety, dancing, parties, and society! Literature is as wide and deep as the human heart. Books, the most enduring of the works of man, are as various as man himself.—*Julius Hare.*

LIFE AND DEATH.

ON parent knees a naked new-born babe
Weeping thou sat'st, while all around thee smiled;
So live that, sinking in thy long last sleep,
Thou then may'st smile, when all around thee weep.
—*From the Arabian.*

HE, my servant, is dear to me who is free from enmity, the friend of all nature, merciful, exempt from pride and selfishness, the same in pain and pleasure, patient of wrongs, contented, constantly devout, of subdued passions and firm resolves; . . . of whom mankind is not afraid; . . . who is unsolicitous about the event of things.—*Bhăgavăt Geetă.*

The question is not: Art thou
Of the nobility?
This is the question: Is there
Nobility in thee?
—*Gleim.*

Devoutly look, and nought
But wonders shall pass by thee;
Devoutly read, and then
All books shall edify thee;
Devoutly speak, and men
Devoutly listen to thee;
Devoutly act, and then
The strength of God acts through thee.
—*Rückert* (*Wisdom of the Brahmin.*)

EACH age has its follies, as its majority is made up of foolish young people; its superstitions appear no superstitions to itself. But after a short time down go its follies and weakness, and the memory of them; its virtues alone remain, and its limitation assumes the form of a beautiful superstition, as the dimness of our sight clothes the objects in the horizon with mist and colour. The revelation of reason is this of the unchangeableness of the fact of humanity under all its subjective aspects, that to the cowering it always cowers, to the daring it opens great avenues. The ancients are only venerable to us because distance has destroyed what was trivial; as the sun and stars affect us grandly only because we cannot reach to their smoke and surfaces, and say—Is this all?—*Emerson.*

IF you want to find the true magic pass into heaven scores of rival professors press round you with obtrusive supply; if you ask, in your sorrow, Who can tell me whether there be a heaven at all? every soul will keep aloof and leave you alone. All men that bring from God a fresh deep nature, all in whom religious wants live with eager power, and who are yet too clear of soul to unthink a thought and falsify a truth, receive in these days no help and no response.—*James Martineau.*

How many days with mute adieu
Have gone down yon untrodden sky;
And still it looks as clear and blue
As when it first was hung on high.
The rolling sun, the frowning cloud
That drew its lightning in its rear,
The thunder tramping deep and loud,
Have left no foot-mark there.

The village-bells, with silver chime,
Come softened by the distant shore;
Though I have heard them many a time,
They never rung so sweet before.
A silence rests upon the hill,
A listening awe pervades the air;
The very flowers are shut and still,
And bowed as if in prayer.

And in this hushed and breathless close,
O'er earth and air and sky and sea,
A still low voice in silence goes,
Which speaks alone, great God, of Thee.
The whispering leaves, the far-off brook,
The linnet's warble fainter grown,
The hive-bound bee, the building rook,—
All these their Maker own.

Now Nature sinks in soft repose,
A living semblance of the grave;
The dew steals noiseless on the rose,
The boughs have almost ceased to wave;
The silent sky, the sleeping earth,
Tree, mountain, stream, the humble sod,
All tell from whom they had their birth,
And cry "Behold a God!"
—*Thomas Miller.*

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MOUNTPOTTINGER MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

SEVENTH SESSION, 1881-2.

PROGRAMME.

1882.
March 1—Lecture—"Life and Genius of Edgar Allan Poe," Rev. F. Thomas.
,, 8—Paper—"Mary, Queen of Scots,"—J. N. Hardy.
,, 15—Lecture—"Charles Waterton, the Naturalist—At Home and Abroad,"—Rev. W. S. Smith.
,, 22—Paper—"Social Cohesion, or on What Terms may Society hold together?"—Blakely Kennedy.
,, 29—Annual Meeting.

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ROSEMARY STREET MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

TENTH SESSION, 1881-82.

The Committee have much pleasure in announcing the following Programme until the end of the Session:—

1882.

Jany. 9—Soiree and Welcome to the President
" 16—Paper, "Hamburg in Summer & Winter," Mr. H. Aston
" 23—Paper, "The Irish Agitation, from an English point of view," - - - - - Mr. A. J. Liversedge.
" 30—Lecture, "Other inhabited Worlds," - Mr. R. Hooke.
Feby. 6—Paper, "Oratory and Orators," - Mr. Murray Blair.
" 13—Music and Readings.
" 20—Paper, "Pseudo Republicanism," Mr F. D. F. O'Connor.
" 27—Lecture, "Seneca," - - - - Rev. J. A. Kelly.
March 6—Paper, "The Present Age,"- - - Mr. Wm. Beck.
" 13—Concert.
" 20—Discussion, "Should the House of Lords be abolished?"
" 27—Lecture, "Protection and Free Trade," Mr. M. Vietel.
April 3—Paper, "Funeral Customs & Reform," Mr. D. H. Brown.
" 10—Easter Monday—no meeting.
" 17—Miscellaneous Original Compositions
May 1—Soiree and Annual Business Meeting.

The meetings are held on Monday evenings at 8 o'clock, in the Rosemary Street Schools.

Admission—To Lectures, Members Free; Non-Members, Sixpence each; to Papers, and to Music and Readings, Free.

Members' Subscription, Four Shillings per annum, which includes the use of the Library.

The Reading Room is open daily from 8 a.m. till 10 p.m., and the papers and periodicals to be supplied for the year 1882 will be sold on Monday evening, 16th January.

WILLIAM R. STITT, FRANCIS E. DALE } *Hon Secs.*

NOTE THE NEW ADDRESS—

UNITARIAN DEPOSITORY,

16 QUEEN'S ARCADE,

DONEGALL PLACE, BELFAST.

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